

Fall 2017 All-Faculty Address

Welcome to fall semester 2017. Before we get started today, we must remember that today is the anniversary of the attacks of 9/11, attacks that were so close to this university and that touched people we know. As well, we should also take some time to think about those in Texas and Florida who are affected by Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma. Please join me in a moment of silence.

Let me start today by noting that I am very pleased to be able to say that after three years of negotiation at the state level, we now have a contract for full-time and adjunct faculty. I know this has been a very difficult process and this matter has shaped so much of what we do here at the University. There are, of course, still many important issues and much for us to work on together—but for the next two years, we do have a contract. As the President noted last week, Human Resources has provided managers with a summary of the changes from the previous state contract. William Paterson University will meet the new financial obligations to staff and faculty. Human Resources has communicated the timing of salary increments to our community. It is also important to note that the University does not, and never did intend to make changes to how we currently provide faculty compensation for lab courses. While we do have a new agreement for faculty, we remain disappointed that an agreement with the CWA has not been achieved.

This morning I would like to take a little of your time to talk with you about the year ahead and what we can accomplish. Before we do, we should recognize those faculty members who have earned tenure and promotion this past year.

Newly Tenured

College Of Arts and Communication:

- Matthew Crick, Communication

Cotsakos College of Business

- Bahar Ashnai, Professional Sales
- Chen-Ho Chao, Marketing and Management
- Priya Nagaraj, Economics, Finance and Global Business

College of Education

- David Fuentes, Elementary and Early Childhood
- Michelle Hinkle, Special Education & Counseling
- Ellen Pozzi, Educational Leadership and Professional Studies

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

- Wendy Christensen, Sociology
- Matthew Kendrick, English
- Danielle Wallace, Africana World Studies

College of Science and Health

- John Bae, Kinesiology
- Michael Griffiths, Environmental Science
- Leo-Felix Jurado, Nursing
- Emily Monroe, Biology
- Daria Napierkowski, Nursing
- Marianne Sullivan, Public Health
- Kristen Victorino, Communication Disorders and Sciences

Promotions

From Assistant Professor to Associate Professor

College of Arts and Communication

- Matthew Crick, Communication
- Peter McGuinness, Music

Cotsakos College of Business

- Bahar Ashnai, Professional Sales
- Priya Nagaraj, Economics, Finance and Global Business

College of Education

- David Fuentes, Elementary and Early Childhood

- Michelle Hinkle, Special Education & Counseling

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

- Wendy Christensen, Sociology
- Sreevidya Kalaramadam, Women's and Gender Studies
- Matthew Kendrick, English
- Danielle Wallace, Africana World Studies

College of Science and Health

- Nicole Davi, Environmental Science
- Michael Griffiths, Environmental Science
- Michael Hodges, Kinesiology
- Daria Napierkowski, Nursing

From Associate Professor to Professor

College of Arts and Communication

- Carol Frierson, Music
- Gina Guerrieri, Communication
- Lauren Razzore, Art

Cotsakos College of Business

- Chen-Ho Chao, Marketing and Management

College of Education

- Carrie Hong, Educational Leadership and Professional Studies
- Timothy VanderGast, Special Education and Counseling

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

- Gennifer Furst, Sociology
- Rajender Kaur, English
- Dewar Macleod, History
- Lucia McMahon, History
- Brian O'Broin, English
- Aaron Tesfaye, Political Science

College of Science and Health

- Michael Figueroa, Kinesiology
- William Kernan, Public Health
- Kendall Martin, Biology
- David Nacin, Mathematics

Congratulations to all newly tenured and newly promoted faculty!

This morning also allows me the opportunity to highlight very briefly some of the achievements of the colleges and divisions in Academic Affairs this year—and this is a very brief list, as I am firm with all the Deans that they need to limit these highlights.

Under the stewardship of Dr. Robert Quicke, Chair of the Department of Communication in the College of Arts and Communication, “Brave New Radio WPSC” earned Best College Radio Station for the third time in six years by the Intercollegiate Broadcasting System. WPSC was also nominated for the “NONCOMMERCIAL STATION OF THE YEAR” by The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) as a finalist for the 2017 NAB “Marconi Radio Awards,” honoring radio stations and on-air personalities for excellence in broadcasting nation-wide.

This past spring, as part of the “I Want My 80s Spring Concert, Students in the Music Program, under the direction of Professor David Philp presented “The Best of MTV’s Early Years” to a packed Shea Center for the Performing Arts audience. The event raised over \$10,000 to support student scholarships. Many of the performers were students from the new Popular Music track, which continues to thrive.

The New strategy-oriented MBA curriculum offered by the Cotsakos College of Business has been enthusiastically received by students and potential employers of our students. Enrollment has reached 260 students, up from 105 in just a few years. In addition, the College has successfully launched a new MBA Pathway Graduate Certificate program designed to meet the needs of busy professionals with an undergraduate degree other than business. Other new initiatives include acceptance of students for summer start, a four- plus-one MBA path for freshmen, and a two-plus-one MBA path for transfer

students. This fall many MBA students are working on projects for outside firms and entities organized under newly conceived “MBA Consulting Group.” Faculty members direct the consulting work of MBA students as part of the curriculum.

The College Business Policy and Practice Research Forum is a faculty research program that builds upon the Cotsakos College of Business’s vision of becoming the “*most industry-connected college of business in the northeast*.” The program provides faculty with opportunities to research policy and practice issues of immediate interest and high importance to businesses and policy makers. It encourages innovation and thought experiments to provide novel insights into the rich domain of issues at the intersection of business and public policy. From 2015 to 2017, 68 CCOB faculty collaborated on 27 cross disciplinary research projects on topics such as the student debt crisis, childhood obesity, fake news and alternative facts, diversity in salesforce recruitment, and environmental factors and cancer mortality, among others. Research findings are disseminated through a variety of means including white papers, conference proceedings, journal submissions, and webinars. The Cotsakos College of Business will also be welcoming its namesake, Dr. Christos Cotsakos, as a faculty member. Dr. Cotsakos will be team-teaching a course in the MBA program this fall.

Dr. Laura Fattal and Dr. Sandra Alon in the College of Education received a \$95,000 grant from UDSE for a Fulbright-Hays project, “Constructing Global Awareness through Multimodal Interdisciplinary Educational Platforms in Israel.” When they return from Israel, these project participants will bring back to their own students and colleagues a rich knowledge of how

to deepen, promote, and intentionally redesign curriculum for global awareness and understanding.

As you may be aware, given the recent WP story, Dr. Colley and Dr. Russell also received a USDE Fulbright-Hays award for next year, so stay tuned. There is more good work to come in next year's address.

The College of Education as well, in partnership with the Paterson Public Schools, received \$100,000 from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation to support integrated arts instruction. This is the sixth year of funding support from the Dodge Foundation.

I also want to make sure to thank and acknowledge Dean Candace Burns, who has announced that she will be returning to a faculty role at William Paterson at the end of this year. Dean Burns has been instrumental in helping to shape the College of Education into a national leader in the development and preparation of new teachers and educational leaders, with an emphasis on both serving the diverse needs of the schools and districts on New Jersey, and bringing under-represented students into the education profession. She has helped build partnerships between the College and many area school districts, been a leader in promoting the profession of education in New Jersey, and has worked tirelessly to win numerous grants and funds for the College and University. Please join with me to say thank you to Candace.

Sixty-three College of Humanities and Social Sciences undergraduate and graduate students presented research and scholarship findings this past year at regional, national, and international professional meetings. Students presented at such venues as the Acoustical Society of America, the Association for

Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, the Association of Writers and Writing Programs, the Interdisciplinary Nineteenth Century Studies Conference, the Joint Journalism and Communication History Conference, the Eastern Psychological Association, the International Conference of the Digital Games Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the Eastern Sociological Society.

College of Humanities and Social Sciences faculty earned over \$750,000 in new or continuing extramural grant funding last year in support of research and program development, including a new three-year research grant from the National Institute of Justice to study adolescent relationship abuse (Michele Cascardi—Psychology) and an award from the Paterson School District to prepare teachers to work with ESL students (Bruce Williams—Languages and Cultures). Additional examples of external recognition of Humanities and Social Sciences faculty include a Woodrow Wilson fellowship (Stephanie Berruz-Rivera—Philosophy), a Japan Studies Institute faculty development grant (Madhuri Mukherjee—Languages & Cultures), a “Best Documentary” award from the Garden State Film Festival (Vince Parrillo—Sociology), and a Women’s History Month Award from the New Jersey Assembly (Sheetal Ranjan—Sociology).

The College of Science and Health continues to value and support experiential learning as a holistic education strategy of student success. Most of the departments in the College have active research programs that involve students. The college was quite visible during Exploration 2017, with events sponsored by the departments of Computer Science (UPS Distinguished Lecture Series) and Mathematics (the Math Association of America (MAA), New Jersey Conference) as well as faculty and

student participation in the Honors Research Presentations. In April 2017, the College hosted the 11th Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium. More than 30 different Institutions from the Greater Tri-State area and beyond were represented, with more than 300 students and over 100 different posters presented. Alumni from the departments in the college served as Judges during the symposium and led a panel discussion with students. Several students had exposure to regional, state and national conferences as part of their experiential learning. Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) remained active throughout the year with several guest speakers. Students from the departments of Kinesiology and Public Health presented their research projects at regional conferences. Students from Environmental Sciences secured very competitive summer internships. Communication Disorders achieved 100% pass rate in their licensure examination and Nursing increased their NCLEX pass rate to over 95%.

Cheng Library continued its transition from analog to digital collections at an aggressive pace with the addition of several electronic titles that brought our e-books collection to almost 200,000 and fast approaching the size of our physical book collection; we concurrently weeded a significant part of the Circulating, Reference, and Periodical collections to better align with University curriculum and research needs. The Library also redesigned its homepage to improve access to resources, extended Chat Reference assistance to 24/7 to ensure availability of assistance at all times, introduced self-booking software for Group Study rooms, and relocated the DVD and CD collection from IRT to Lending Services.

Academic Development has continued its work in supporting students, offering expanded tutoring options for students to include evening hours in the Library. Tutoring, academic coaching and workshops are also now available in the Residence Halls in the evenings and on Sunday. Starting this fall, Starfish, an academic support tool and process, is now live for the whole community--faculty, staff and students. Information sessions will be available throughout the semester.

Together with the Small Business Development Center under Kate Muldoon, the School of Continuing and Professional Education co-sponsored the *4th Annual Cyber-Security and Big Data Analytics Symposium* in March, bringing in leading experts from IBM, UPS, ADP, NJEdge.net, Verizon, St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center, and others for the keynote address and thought-provoking panel discussions. Our Computer Science and Cotsakos College of Business faculty also invited their students to attend, and many of them stayed long after the event concluded to talk with these industry experts. The next symposium is scheduled for March 23, 2018. In July and August, SCPE hosted nearly 400 international high school students who lived on campus for 6 weeks while attending ESL classes, joining WP Summer Youth Program courses, and taking excursions to New York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, DC. The success of this program led to a request for a long-term partnership between WP and our Italian partner Interstudio Viaggi.

The Honors College continued to support and promote the scholarly activities of its students. This past year, 68 Honors College students completed senior projects and 23 of those students presented their work at juried national or regional conferences. Honors senior Abigail DeBel, a communications disorder

major in the honors cognitive science track, won third place for her presentation “Does Modality Matter? Reading Comprehension on Mobile Screens and on Paper” at the Hudson Valley Undergraduate Psychology conference. Honors graduate Jessica Super, a history and secondary education major who completed the performing and literary arts track, was named 2017 Outstanding Senior by the William Paterson Alumni Association, and Honors graduate Frederik Hagbarth, a double major in finance and global business who completed the honors business track was the student speaker at the Legacy Gala. We should also note that the Honors College has a “new” leader, Dr. Barbara Andrew. Barbara has served this past two years as Interim Director, and following a national search, she was named Executive Director. She has already worked to revise the Honors curriculum to emphasize more common experiences for Honors students, and will be working in the next few years to expand and grow the Honors College. Thank you, Barbara, for taking on this role.

Congratulations to all the students, faculty and staff who helped make this past academic year a success. As we move into the 2017-18 academic year, we have a number of opportunities and challenges ahead of us.

President Waldron last week touched upon the challenges we face in terms of student enrollment. We have seen stable and even growing numbers of first time students coming to us, even as high school enrollments decline. We have continued to grow our first-time first year class—and that is impressive as high school graduates decline. However, we are also a very transfer dependent (and transfer friendly) school, and the number of transfer students has continued to decline over the past few years. The

reason why is no secret—enrollment in the county colleges from which most of our transfer students come has dropped by double digits in the past few years. Community College enrollment is tied tightly to economic conditions---countercyclical. As the economy improves, community college enrollment declines. This has meant a steady decline in our transfer student enrollment as well.

As Vice President for Enrollment Management Reginald Ross has noted and documented numerous times, our biggest issue is not declining new enrollment; it is that we lose too many students during the course of their study at William Paterson. We do this at the same time that we are having striking success in improving our graduation numbers and four-year graduation rate. We project we will have a four-year graduation rate above 30% when we do the final numbers. While still too low, we have grown that rate at an amazing pace. For the graduating class of 2010, only 14.1% graduated in four years. The graduating class of 2016 was at 29.2%--more than double and we should be above 30% for the class of 2017. This is truly amazing and a testament to the work of all the faculty and staff at William Paterson.

Even as we graduate more students in a timely fashion, we still lose too many students who leave without a degree. We have focused a lot of our attention, and rightfully so, on the number of first year students who leave us after only one year or even one semester. We have lost, on average, about 25% of each first year class for a number of years—about 350 students a year. But we lose about 2000 students in total each year who leave us without completing their degree. This is a challenge that directly affects what we do in the classroom and how we operate financially as a university. We are tuition driven, and when our students leave us, they leave us with fewer resources to operate.

The numbers are clear: Our undergraduate enrollment has declined by almost 10% in the last five years; graduate enrollment has grown by a little more than 10%, but we remain predominately an undergraduate institution, so our overall enrollment, graduate and undergraduate, has dropped by a little over 7% in the past five years (<http://www.wpunj.edu/ira/FACTBOOKS/FB16/T2.1.pdf>). Let's be clear—this is not in any way, shape or form spiraling down. This is a challenge that we can meet by intensifying our efforts in retaining and helping our students succeed academically.

I encourage you to attend the town hall on budget and enrollment, scheduled for October 24. More information on that event will be coming out shortly.

As the President also noted last week, William Paterson University is financially strong—we are not in any way facing any sort of financial crisis. We are a tuition dependent university, of course, and as enrollment has declined, so has that form of revenue. As the President noted, as part of our successful bond sale this past month, both Moody's and Fitch provided an analysis of our finances. Please do take some time to read through these reports. We will need to increase our efforts at building revenue and managing costs. We need to work together to make sure our students are academically successful and that they stay with us to graduation. And we need to look closely at how we use our resources.

We are a university. We teach, we engage in scholarship and we serve our communities. All of this requires support.

I have asked the Deans to be even more vigilant in looking at how we schedule courses and how we manage enrollments. We know there are unique needs in lab courses and studio courses, and we know that many subjects require smaller classes to be taught well. But there are opportunities for us to be more effective in how we schedule. We have small classes and we will continue to have small classes. Unlike most public universities, we do not even have the rooms on campus to have truly large classes. Many of us have taught or been students in four or five hundred student lectures. Those are large classes. In Fall 2012, our average class size was at 19.2; by Fall of 2015, that number had risen to 20.8—still quite small, especially for a public state university and a steady increase in average class size. In Fall of 2016 that number declined to 19.5, even as enrollments declined.

A class of 25 is still a small class, and we do have classes of 30 or more students—which are still relatively small. Even with lab restrictions, studio classes in art and music, we can and should be aiming for average class size of 25. That does not mean massive class size increases. We do need to work at how we schedule and how we enroll so that we use resources well and teach our students well.

As I noted at the start, we have had great success in helping our students succeed and graduate in a timely fashion. This is a result of the combined work of all the faculty and staff. The professional staff in Academic Development have completed a reorganization so that they can offer more direct student assistance to those students in greatest need. Our professional advisors and other support staff, including the staff of Student Enrollment Services, work with our students on a regular basis. And you,

the faculty of William Paterson, are in daily contact with our students, inside the classroom and outside as well. This cooperative work drove the doubling of the four-year graduation rate.

Now we need that same level of cooperation and focus so we can be as successful in addressing the retention of our students. One of the most effective approaches to addressing student retention is by having our full-time tenured and tenure track faculty teaching in entry-level courses. Those courses both entice students into majors and, at times, function as obstacles for too many of our students. When we have full-time faculty teaching these students, we are better preparing them for the rigor of our upper division courses and providing the educational support our students need.

One of the most effective ways that we in Academic Affairs can work to enhance student success is by looking carefully at both what we teach and how we schedule and sequence our classes.

In terms of curriculum, this past year was a good year. Faculty developed, proposed and have either implemented or will soon implement new and revised undergraduate programs, programs that address the changes in our disciplines and the changing needs of our students.

We need to continue this, both at the undergraduate and graduate level. I am looking forward to the proposed new programs in Actuarial Science, Urban Science and Society, Disability Studies and Business Analytics, to name a few. I am also looking forward to the implementation this spring of the Executive Masters in Sales Leadership. These are all examples of new and innovative academic programs that will bring in new students and provide more reasons for our continuing students to stay at William Paterson.

In talking about enrollment earlier, we noted that graduate enrollment has grown these past few years, which is a very good sign. However, that growth has been almost exclusively driven by just a few programs. The MBA program has more than doubled in size in the past five years, and is on target to triple in size in just a few more years. The graduate program in Special Education has also seen this type of growth.

Unfortunately, other graduate programs have seen declining enrollments—very significant declines in some. We have programs that have declined by 30, 40 or even more than 50% in the past few years. We cannot continue to operate programs that serve single digit enrollments, enroll only 4, or 5 or 6 students a year, and graduate the same or fewer numbers. I have asked the Deans and Associate Provost Lincoln to work with these programs to consider both the content and the structure of these programs so that we can grow these programs and grow graduate enrollment overall at William Paterson. In order to complete these redesigns, there will be a small number of low-enrolled graduate programs that will be on hiatus this year as they work on redesign. Graduate programs at William Paterson need to grow and thrive, and our mission in graduate education, as stated in our Strategic Plan, is to offer graduate degrees for professional advancement, career growth and intellectual development. We then must offer programs in a way that meets the needs of students—using technology for online and hybrid offerings, and offering our graduate programs in structured cohort models that allow students to plan for their degrees and allow the University to use our resources wisely.

We cannot leave here today without addressing the politics and current events that have touched us all.

This has been a turbulent summer, and the fall promises more of the same. President Waldron last week confirmed what we stand for as a university, and what we will do for our students.

We are a university, and we say clearly and proudly that we celebrate and promote diversity and citizenship.

Diversity and citizenship: These are characteristics that will be vitally important this year.

We have seen over the summer the clear intent by some in this country to attack, literally, the diversity of our people and to question what it means to be a citizen. We have watched this past year increasing attacks on factual evidence, on reasoned thinking, and even on such bedrock concepts as the scientific method. We have seen sheer denial of overwhelming evidence and scientific consensus. Reason itself is dismissed when it runs counter to belief.

I was proud of our faculty this past year in how we came together to study, teach and document what was happening—the Social Justice Project and the Gandhian Forum in particular. Both of these faculty-led groups made sure that as a University we kept our focus on diversity and citizenship, on clarifying the “real” and the “fake” when it comes to news, and making sure that we all are able to come to reasoned decisions as opposed to simply following the mob of common belief. We also saw a group of faculty, staff and students come together to make sure that the University continues to address support for all of our students, including those whose dreams are being threatened by government actions.

I already know that both the Social Justice Project and the Gandhian Forum will continue to do this work. I know that individual faculty members, such as Associate Professor Wendy Christensen in Sociology, who was featured this summer in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, will be making sure that their classes will keep up the focus on diversity and citizenship.

This will be a challenging year—and I know that the challenge will be met.

Those of you who have been listening to these addresses for a few years know that I try to bring a little geeky culture to these talks. With that in mind, and apropos of our need to keep up the fight for reason and justice and goodness, I leave you with the thoughts of J.K. Rowling, who put these words in the mouth of Albus Dumbledore as he spoke of the real frailty of evil in the form of Lord Voldemort:

“That which Voldemort does not value, he takes no trouble to comprehend. Of house-elves and children’s tales, of love, loyalty and innocence, Voldemort knows and understands nothing. Nothing. That they all have a power behind his own, a power beyond the reach of any magic, is a truth he has never grasped.”

And thus it is with education as well: You in your classrooms have a power to make sure that all of our students can learn to reason and to think and to care—and that is a power which cannot be taken away from them.

Have a good semester.